

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A vehicle door outer handle system comprising:

an operating handle comprising a handle main body made of a synthetic resin and a cover made of a synthetic resin so as to cover the outer side of the handle main body, the operating handle being disposed on an outer side of a vehicle door;

a pair of electrodes; and

a circuit board on which is provided a detection circuit for detecting a change in capacitance between the electrodes,

wherein the electrodes, and the circuit board and a ground plate are being housed within the operating handle,

wherein the electrodes are covered by the ground plate and are patterned on the circuit board, and

wherein a covering portion made of synthetic resin covers the ground plate and is also disposed between the ground plate and the electrodes.

2. **(Previously Presented)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 1 wherein, among opposite faces of the circuit board, a component of the detection circuit is mounted on the face on the side opposite to the face where the electrodes are patterned.

3. **(Previously Presented)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to either Claim 1 or 2, wherein, among opposite faces of the circuit board, the electrodes are patterned on the face on the vehicle side.

4. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 1, wherein a sensor unit comprising the electrodes, the circuit board, and ~~[[a]]~~ the covering portion made of a synthetic resin and covering the electrodes and the circuit board is fixedly housed in a housing recess formed in the handle main body so as to open on the cover side.

5. **(Previously Presented)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 4, wherein the electrodes and the circuit board are mounted on a holder, a majority of the holder being covered by the covering portion so as to form a part of the sensor unit.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 5, wherein ~~[[a]]~~ the ground plate ~~forming~~ forms a part of the sensor unit and is mounted on the holder ~~so as to cover the electrodes and is covered by the covering portion.~~

7. **(Previously Presented)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 5, wherein a portion of the holder projecting from the covering portion is mounted on a mounting seat provided on the handle main body.

8. **(Previously Presented)** The vehicle door outer handle system according to Claim 4, wherein the electrodes and the circuit board are mounted on a holder, and a portion of the holder projects from the covering portion and is mounted on the mounting seat provided on the handle main body.